

REMARKS

This paper is filed in response to the Office Action dated January 21, 2004. As this paper is filed on June 21, 2004 with a two-month extension of time and a Request for Continued Examination, the paper is timely filed.

I. Status of Amendments

Claims 1-4, 8, 10-36, and 43-52 were pending prior to this amendment. By this amendment, applicants cancel claims 1-4, 8, 10-36, and 43-52, and add new claims 53-72. Thus, claims 53-72 are pending.

Because applicants previously paid fees for 4 independent and 42 total claims, applicants' amendments do not require a further fee to be paid.

II. Response to the January 21 Office Action

In the January 21 Office Action, claims 1-4, 8, 10-36, 43-49, 51 and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as allegedly unpatentable over Baerlocher et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,406,369). On the other hand, claim 50 was found to be allowable.

Applicants present herewith claim 53. Claim 53 is based on claims 43, 49, and 50, previously presented. Claim 53 has been amended to reduce the number of redundant recitations present in previously presented claims 43, 49, and 50, and to improve the consistency of the newly presented claim. Given the relation of claim 53 to previously presented claims 43, 49, and 50, applicants submit that claim 53 is allowable.

As to claims 54-72, claims 54-72 depend, directly or indirectly, from claim 53. Because claim 53 is patentable, claims 54-72 are also allowable.

II. Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement

Applicant files herewith a Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement. In the Supplemental Information Disclosure Statement, applicant cites U.S. Patent Application No. 10/029,381 ("the '381 application") and U.S. Published Application No. 2003/0114219,

which is the published version of the '381 application. Additionally, applicant cites the most recent amendment (dated May 6, 2004) and Office Action (dated January 6, 2004) in regard to the '381 application (in particular, note claims 1, 28, 43, and 53, amended to incorporate the limitations of claims 10, 41, 52 and 56, respectively, found to be allowable). For ease of reference, the May 6 amendment and the January 6 Office Action have been appended to the end of this document as well. Further, applicant cites those documents not previously cited to or by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in the above-mentioned application that were cited to or by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office during the prosecution of the '381 application.

The undersigned also notes the following. The named inventor of the '381 application is the named inventor of the above-mentioned application. Moreover, the assignee of the '381 application at the time of filing, Anchor Gaming, was the assignee of the above-mentioned application at the time of filing. Further, the '381 application and the above-mentioned application were both transferred from Anchor Gaming to the present assignee, IGT. However, neither the undersigned nor his firm prepared the above-mentioned application or the '381 application, and the undersigned did not become aware of a relationship between the subject matter of the '381 application and the subject matter of the above-mentioned application until recently, when he reviewed the Office Action issued in regard to the '381 application.

A similar Information Disclosure Statement has been submitted in the '381 application in regard to the above-mentioned application, its prosecution, and the documents cited by and to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in regard to the above-mentioned application that have not previously been cited in the '381 application.

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IV. Summary

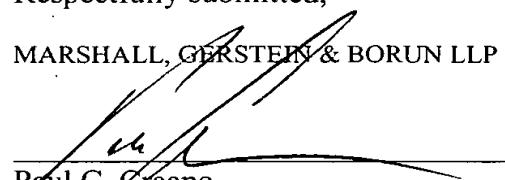
In view of the foregoing, reconsideration is respectfully requested. If there is any matter that the Examiner would like to discuss, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned representative at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,

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